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Issue 18 | May 2008

360zine

Free Magazine For Xbox 360 Gamers. *Read it, Print it, Send it to your mates...*

MASSIVE PREVIEW NINJA GAIDEN II

Tecmo's latest looks bloody brilliant...



REVIEW!
EURO 2008
Gearing up for summer

MASSIVE REVIEW!
GTA IV
Here at last!

PREVIEW & INTERVIEW
FALLOUT 3

FIRST LOOKS!

 **BAJA**
Could Baja be a MotorStorm beater?

 **STAR WARS: THE FORCE UNLEASHED**
Preview inside there is...

 **OPERATION DARKNESS**
Werewolves & Nazis. Nice!

ROBERT LUDLUM'S THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW
THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY

PLUS
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
We talk to Lead Designer Rory McGuire inside...

PLUS! EXCLUSIVE BOURNE CONSPIRACY SUPPLEMENT INSIDE...



|02

Welcome to 360Zine



After months of speculation the wait is finally over and the world's biggest videogame has now been released on both next-gen consoles. In short GTA IV is nothing short of a tour de force and if you're old enough to play you simply have to get stuck in today - assuming you haven't already that is. Read the review and send us your comments - we'd love to hear your points of view...

Not surprisingly there's not a huge release schedule to trawl through while GTA IV laps up the retail limelight, but there's plenty-a-coming in the next few weeks and months. Ninja Gaiden II is imminent and looking stupendous, while Fallout 3 is a little further down the line, but with equally lofty ambitions. Don't miss the latest news on both starting on page 10.

Enjoy the issue...

360Zine FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of the new issue.

Dan Hutchinson, Editor
360zine@gamerzines.com

MEET THE TEAM

Probably the best games writers on the planet



Chris Schilling
Larging it up in Liberty City



Steve Hill
Looking forward to Fallout 3



Lee Hall
Unlike England, playing Euro 2008



Baja
Take to the dunes

Don't miss! This month's top highlights



Ninja Gaiden II
MASSIVE PREVIEW



Fallout 3
Preview & Interview



Euro 2008
Enger-land, Enger-land. Er, no.



GTA IV
The definitive review

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QUICK FINDER

Every game's just a click away!

Star Wars: Unreal
The Force Unleashed Tournament III
Baja Battlefield: Bad Company
Operation Darkness Ninja Gaiden II
Braid The Wheelman
Mortal Kombat vs. Mortal Kombat vs.
DC Universe Grand Theft Auto IV
Silent Hill: Euro 2008
Homecoming XBLA





Previews



Publisher: Lucasarts

Developer: Lucasarts

Heritage: Wars:

Battlefront, Jedi Knight

series

Link: <http://www.lucasarts.com/games/theforceunleashed/>

ETA: September 19th



As you advance through the game, you'll learn additional powers to enable you to deal with the toughest situations. Break out the Force lightning if you've a room full of enemies.



PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Star Wars: The Force Unleashed



The realistic way the character models animate combined with the amazing physics makes hurling your thirtieth Stormtrooper as much fun as the first.

"The first level offers a jaw-dropping experience right off the bat"

FIRST LOOK

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed

An advanced physics engine you have, hmm?

What's the story?

Set between Episodes III and IV, you control a new apprentice of Darth Vader, tasked with helping the Dark Lord of the Sith rid the galaxy of the last remaining Jedi. Yet with screens and videos showing players attacking Stormtroopers and the like, we wouldn't bet against the possibility of wandering from the path of the Dark Side and turning good, if the player so chooses.

What do we know?

The first level offers a jaw-dropping experience right off the bat - the chance to play as Darth Vader himself! It's a remarkable turn of events for a Lucasarts Star Wars title, the company thus far resisting temptation to really use the Sith Lord's Jedi powers. Set on the Wookie planet of Kashyyyk, you're able to unleash a devastating force blast which will send the walking furballs flying - with the game's Euphoria physics engine seeing them topple from bridges and platforms and even making distant Wookies stumble and sway. Once you take control over the game's main protagonist (about whom Lucasarts remain very secretive) you'll have similar powers, as well as the ability to wield a mean lightsaber, and conjure Force lightning to zap multiple assailants.

When do we get more?

It's due for release on the 19th September, just three days after the US version.

Anything else to declare?

There's an additional engine working alongside Euphoria named DMM, which allows matter to react in an ultra-realistic manner - so metal will bend and break as you use your powers to rip apart doors and wooden bridges will wobble and shake, adding further to the immersion provided by the awesome physics.

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PLAYSTATION 3



CONTROL ➔



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Previews

BAJA

Publisher: THQ

Developer: 2XL Games

Heritage: N/A

Link: <http://www.bajagame.com/>

ETA: Q3 2008



Some of the tracks are fearosomely difficult to navigate - sharp curves and steep inclines at the same time? How on earth will you keep those sponsor logos clean?



As you progress through the single-player mode, you'll go from small buggies to giant four-wheel drive trucks. There are well over a hundred vehicles in the game, so there's plenty of choice.



The Baja 1000 race is the big one - three hundred miles of track, with the shadows lengthening as the day goes on. Four hours is a long time to race - have you got the stamina?



FIRST LOOK

Baja

Getting your wheels dirty with THQ's dusty off-roader

What's the story?

The world isn't exactly under-subscribed for off-road racing games, but Baja looks to offer something different from the MotorStorms and DiRTs of the current console generation. It's certainly not shy of content, offering almost a hundred courses which are split into a number of different challenges, set in places like Nevada, Arizona and Mexico. So rather than splashing through gloopy wet mud like Sega Rally, you'll be whipping up dust storms as you travel through winding desert tracks.

What do we know?

There are two particularly neat touches which elevate Baja above its rivals. One is the way you earn money - while the best way to make the most cash is to finish in first, the amount of sponsorship money you earn is based on how visible the sponsors' logos are at the end of the race. So a clean, careful race seeing you finish outside the top three could yet net you a tidy sum, while bashing your way to the finish line will see those sponsors tear up their cheques. The other feature will only be used by a small minority, but it's cool nonetheless - link up three Xbox 360 consoles and three TVs and you can play in Panoramic mode, which allows you to get a real widescreen view of your surroundings.

When do we get more?

It's been pencilled in for a US release in August, so expect it to reach European shores shortly afterwards.

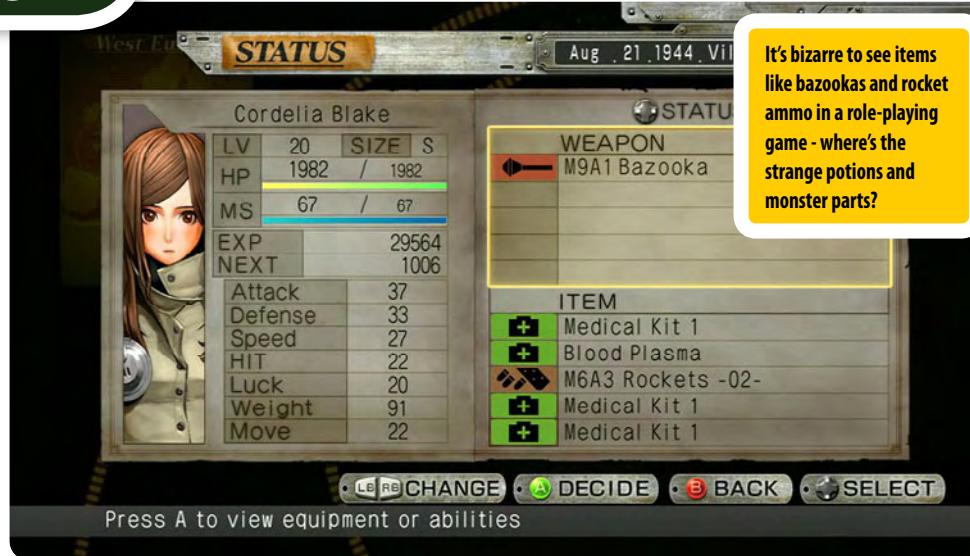
Anything else to declare?

There's a 300-mile race which apparently takes four real-time hours to complete - though you can set the AI to temporarily race for you if you need a loo break...

PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!
Click here to
tell us what
you think of
Baja!



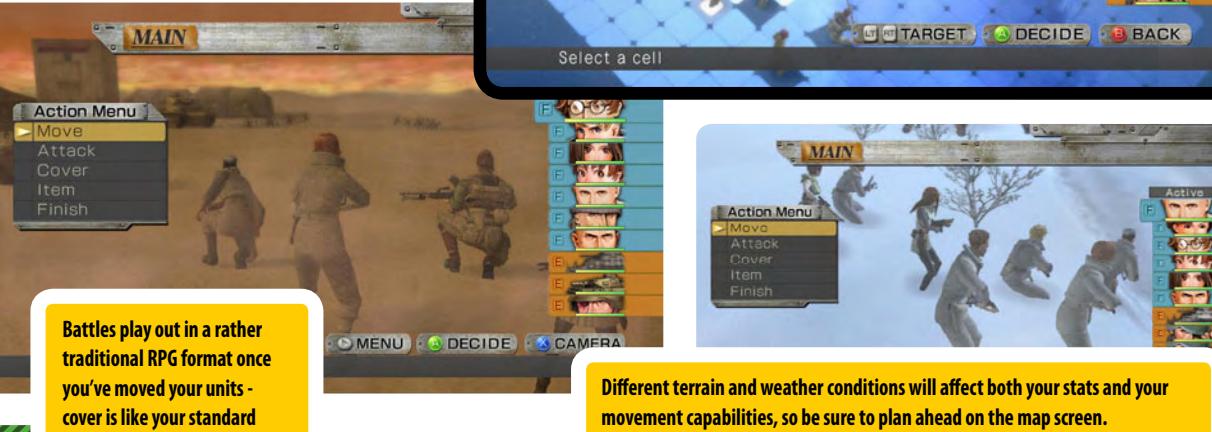
Publisher: Atlus
 Developer: Success
 Heritage: Zoo Keeper, Mystery Detective
[Link: http://www.atlus.com/operationdarkness/home.html](http://www.atlus.com/operationdarkness/home.html)
 ETA: TBC 2008



Press A to view equipment or abilities



Select a cell



Battles play out in a rather traditional RPG format once you've moved your units - cover is like your standard defensive move, allowing you to protect team-mates.

Different terrain and weather conditions will affect both your stats and your movement capabilities, so be sure to plan ahead on the map screen.

FIRST LOOK

Operation Darkness

Werewolves and Nazis make for strange bedfellows...

What's the story?

You're probably not going to believe us if we tell you, but here goes. You take control of the first platoon of K Company in the SAS (codenamed The Wolf Pack) in an alternate universe take on World War II. You're fighting against Hitler and the German army, of course, but using more than just weapons. The platoon isn't called the Wolf pack for nothing, you know - particularly once you realise its leader, James Gallant, can transform into the creature his pack is named after.

What do we know?

Yes, that's right - and things get weirder still. It seems Hitler has been dabbling in the supernatural and has recruited skeletal armies, zombies and werewolves to his cause. But you're not exactly shy of otherworldly powers - your various characters (including nominal young hero Edward Kyle and stereotypical spunky female Cordelia Blake) all can cast spells as well as chucking grenades. It's a tactical RPG which is vaguely reminiscent of the Fire Emblem series - you move your squad on a grid-based map and battles take place in dramatic 3D sequences.

When do we get more?

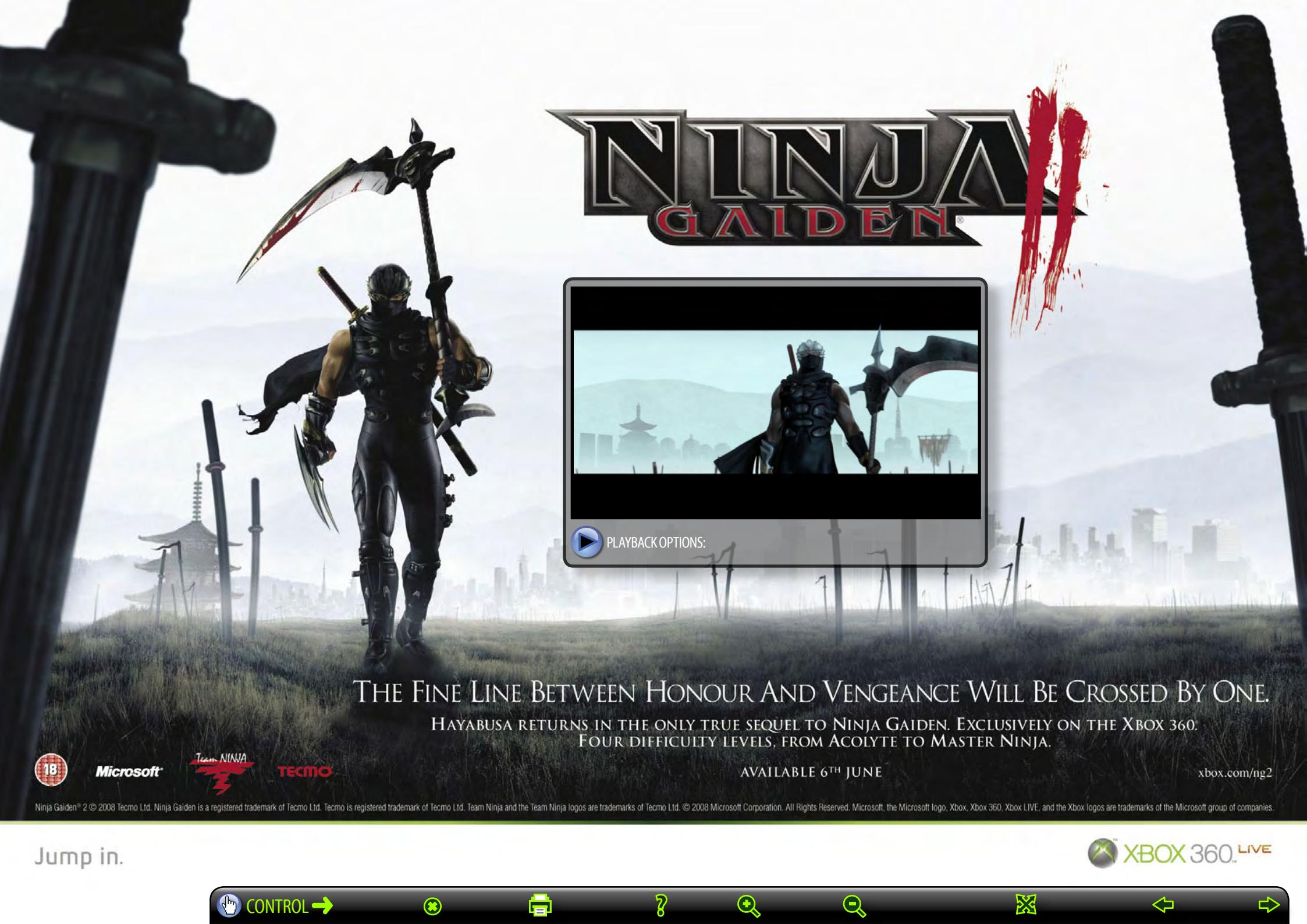
The US version is released on June 24th - and though it's not been confirmed for a UK release just yet, it's surely only a matter of time before a smaller publisher (someone like Rising Star Games) localises it for Europe.

Anything else to declare?

The game's trailer is supremely strange. Watch it at the link given in the info box, paying particular attention to the slo-mo bullet fired at a dazed Hitler at the end. Brilliantly barmy stuff.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
 Click here to tell us what you think of Operation Darkness!





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INCOMING

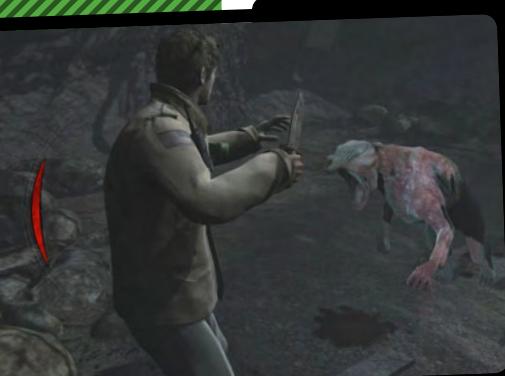
A fistful of top new titles coming to 360...



Braid

Publisher: Microsoft | ETA: Spring

It's not often we'll feature an Xbox Live Arcade game here, but mark our words – Braid is going to be very special indeed. It's a platform-puzzler that uses time-manipulation as its central mechanic, but in a far more inventive and clever way than, say, Timeshift. This year's Portal? Could be...



Silent Hill: Homecoming

Publisher: Konami | ETA: September

A new title and a release date for Konami's first new generation iteration of its popular (and absolutely terrifying) survival horror series. As usual, it's all about a missing person – this time protagonist Alex Shepherd must visit the titular village to search for his brother. A brand new combat system should alleviate one of the only problems the earlier games had.



The Wheelman

Publisher: Midway | ETA: 2008

An open world driving game which stars gravel-gargling beefcake Vin Diesel, The Wheelman could be one of the surprise hits of the year. Diesel, a keen gamer himself, has had a great deal of input in the game's content. Given the last time he did that we got the superb Chronicles of Riddick, our hopes are high for this one.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us the games you're waiting for...

Mortal Kombat vs. DC Universe

Publisher: Midway | ETA: Autumn

Midway's gory fighting series meets Superman, Batman et al in this forthcoming brawler, which is looking a little less bloody than usual for a Mortal Kombat game. The story tells of a violent, powerful force that causes two universes to collide, but really it's just an excuse for some entertainingly iconoclastic scraps. Though how do you beat Superman?



Unreal Tournament III

Publisher: Midway | ETA: Summer

Epic's multiplayer-focused FPS finally makes it to Microsoft's console, and it's looking in better shape than ever thanks to a host of new features. Two new characters are introduced, there's a splitscreen offline mode for lounge-based deathmatch antics, and five brand new maps to drive and shoot around.



Battlefield: Bad Company

Publisher: EA | ETA: 23rd June

The popular multiplayer FPS returns amid controversy over EA charging extra for downloadable weapons. But with that issue resolved, ace developer DICE should provide another fine shooter – this time with an increased focus on the single-player experience.

UPCOMING

SPRING

- **Cobra 11: Crash Time** – 9th May
- **Roogoo** – 16th May

SUMMER

- **Plunder** – Summer
- **Super Puzzle Fighter II Turbo HD Remix** – Summer

AUTUMN

- **Saint's Row 2** – 29th August
- **Midnight Club: LA** – Sept

WINTER

- **Gears of War 2** – Nov
- **Dead Space** – 31st October

grand theft auto IV



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HANDS ON

Ninja Gaiden II

Gaiden star - Tecmo's latest looks bloody brilliant

It's fair to say that 2004's Ninja Gaiden surprised a few people. Arriving without a great deal of fanfare - despite being a remake of a hugely popular late Eighties arcade game, it blindsided critics and audiences with a near-perfect blend of fast-paced scrapping action, superb platforming sequences, and an intense challenge.

Too intense for some, it's fair to say - the series' extreme difficulty hadn't been lowered over the intervening years. On the contrary - Tomonobu Itagaki's hardcore reimagining of the franchise in 3D sorted out the men from the boys, with some players



Gaiden II's first boss is tough enough on his own - when he turns up later on with an army of ninjas in tow, you'll be panic-stricken!

unable to make it past the game's first boss. While it was hard, though, it was almost always fair, apart from the save points being spaced way too far apart, and the game's dynamic camera not always providing the optimum view of the action.

Though NGII's camera is an undoubtedly improvement, it's still far from perfect - the option to centre it behind Ryu with the right trigger is certainly a welcome one. But its other slight niggles have been tightened up. Those save points are more frequent,



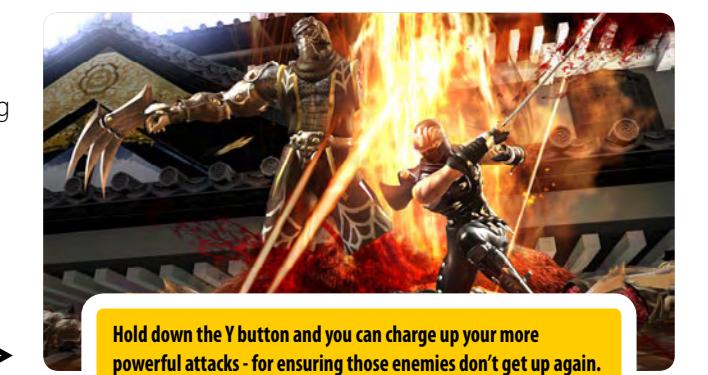
"Ryu is a whirling dervish - dealing death to all comers with his array of deadly weaponry"

and placed more sensibly, also allowing you to heal your wounds after particularly tough battles. If anything, the action seems even quicker than before, with Ryu becoming a whirling dervish - dealing death to all comers with his array of deadly weaponry.

And what a collection of head-removing, flesh-ripping items they



These arrow-shooting foes can be a real pain. Give them a taste of their own medicine with a charged blast from your bow, or run up close to rip their arms off.



Hold down the Y button and you can charge up your more powerful attacks - for ensuring those enemies don't get up again.

The game's more fantastical elements probably helped it scrape past the censor - it's one of the goriest games we've ever seen.

Publisher: Microsoft Game Studios

Developer: Tecmo

Heritage: Dead Or Alive

series, Ninja Gaiden

Link: <http://www.xbox.com/en-US/games/splash/ninjagaiden2/default.htm>

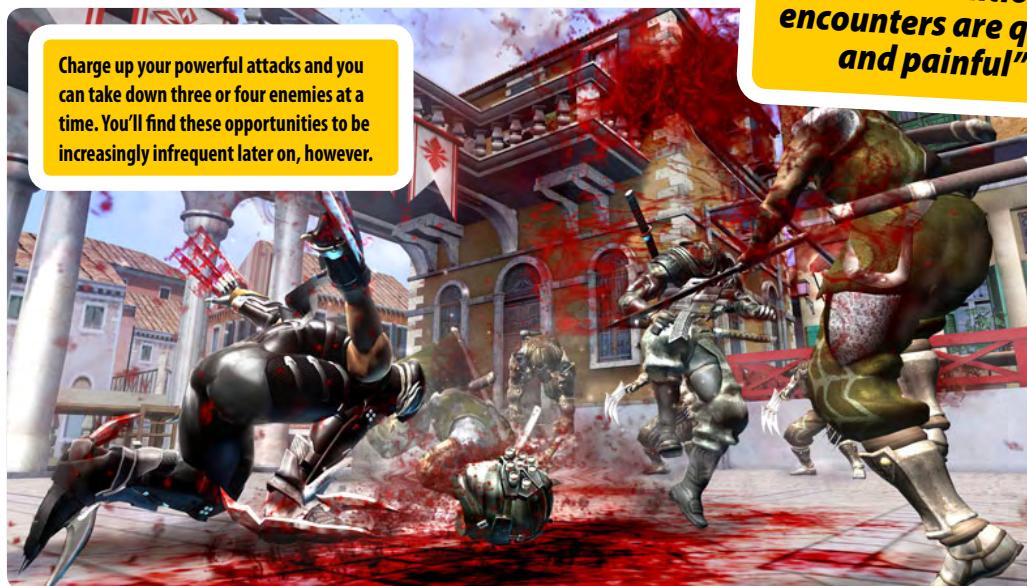
ETA: 6th June



The visually-stunning New York level has an epic boss fight at its climax. Seeing off this beast should take a fair while.



"Bloodier than pretty much any game you care to mention, encounters are quick and painful"



>Ninja Gaiden II continued

are. From the Lunar Staff which can pummel foes into submission, to the Falcon's Talons which attach sharp steel spikes to Ryu's hands and feet, which he can use in short range melees to

literally tear enemies limb from limb. Bloodier than pretty much any game you care to mention, encounters are quick and painful - requiring instant reactions to block and parry incoming attacks, and perfect timing to dodge and counter. Boss fights are particularly



With twin swords, enemies have twice as much blocking to do. For stubborn foes, just leap over their heads and stab them from behind.

PREVIEW FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of *Ninja Gaiden II*

punishing - Chapter Two's guardian has one move which takes away around half your energy - so you need to watch for telltale animations like a hawk. Timing is tricky to learn, but once mastered, you'll be dancing a merry jig of death around scores of circling baddies, slicing and dicing your way through them until they're little more than piles of useless flesh, their surroundings stained a deep crimson with torrents of blood and innards.

So yes, it's not for the weak of stomach. But Gaiden's violence has a meaning. Every scrap is meant to represent a fight to the death, and you'll feel like you've been put through the mill, even when only facing four of the game's rival ninja clan - essentially, the basic enemy grunt. It's death over dishonour for them - legless foes will drag their carcasses towards an

unsuspecting Ryu while he's dealing with a standing opponent, in an attempt to pull off an explosive suicide attack.

Thankfully, there's more than one way to skin a cat - or in this case decimate a group of enemy ninjas. Old man Muramasa returns with his helpful shop, and his amazing performing eyebrows. The store features brand new weapons, some of which are absurdly welcome treats. The Gatling Spear Gun is a particular delight, especially given how ineffectual the standard shurikens now are as a ranged weapon. There's also the opportunity to upgrade your existing arsenal, with swords doing more damage, and the Talons extending in length. That bit of extra oomph in battle is definitely required for some of the later stages, with larger enemies becoming the





Previews



The game certainly takes you through some varied locales.



"Ninja Gaiden II is an ultra-refined sequel to a storming original"

Better to be safe than sorry - if you're not sure whether an enemy's going to get up, stab him while he's grounded to make sure.

Falcon's Talons are only useful in close-up combat, but their destructive abilities make them our favourite weapon.



>Ninja Gaiden II continued

norm rather than the exception.

Fortunately, you also have the luxury of your ninja magic, or ninpo. Ranging from powerful balls of flame to wind 'blades' which slice multiple enemies into tiny pieces, these are best used when you're in a spot of bother - either just before a save point when short of energy, or left to the enormous guardians which close out each stage. If you thought the standard fighting was intense, just wait until you meet these behemoths. You soon learn why your early assailants are named The Black Spider Clan when first boss Genshin appears - this arachnid foe can rip newcomers to shreds if they're not well versed in parrying and dodging. The heart-stopping moment when he appears later, not as an end-of-level boss, but halfway through the stage is the point when you realise how much you need to raise your own game to compete. Button-mashing will get you absolutely nowhere here.

It's evolution rather than revolution, but that's not really an issue here

considering the first game got so much right. Ninja Gaiden II is an ultra-refined sequel to a storming original,



Though Ryu gets plenty of blood on his blades, if you wait a few seconds after a battle, he'll wipe it off, which looks insanely cool.

and contains enough action to sate even those who were becoming jaded with roaming beat-em-ups. Itagaki-san has another potential classic on his hands. ●

EASY GOING?

Has NGII been tailored for a mainstream audience?

Though Microsoft claim it's "accessible to novices", we can't see your Wii-loving older relatives getting very far. Path of the Acolyte - the game's lowest difficulty - is still tougher than Normal mode on most games, and should you choose Path of the Warrior, you'll likely be dying every five minutes. On the lower difficulty, it's still undeniably a little easier than Gaiden on Xbox - save points allow you to heal, while Obliteration techniques (one hit kills) are pretty simple to pull off. But those after a hardcore challenge will certainly find one - two further difficulties above Warrior will surely weed out the precious few with genuine ninja-like reactions in battle.

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90%

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

90%

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FALLOUT 3

Publisher: Bethesda
Softworks

Developer: Bethesda
Softworks

Heritage: The Elder Scrolls
IV: Oblivion, Star Trek Legacy

Link: <http://fallout.bethsoft.com/index.html>

ETA: September

HANDS ON

Fallout 3

We witness the opening stages of the year's most eagerly-awaited RPG

"War. War never changes." growls the voiceover. The Ink Spots croon I Don't Want To Set The World On Fire through a crackly wireless in a battered, ruined tram, as the camera rises to reveal a devastated Washington DC. Zooming further out, we see a gas mask-wearing brute toting a gigantic gun. Cue titles.

Opening with the series' most iconic catchphrase, it's clear that Bethesda have gone to some lengths to ensure that Fallout 3, while very different from its predecessors, is still very recognisably Fallout. The two PC games from the late Nineties attracted a substantial, fanatical cult following,



Though almost everything is in ruins, some evidence of the pre-war world remains intact. The Vault Boy, which is essentially the game's emblem, is part of the special edition boxset of the game - in bobblehead form.



"The depiction of a world destroyed by nuclear war is wholly convincing"

The minigun can just about chew through anything, though it needs a little time to warm up. It's worth the wait, though.

and it's this bunch that have been watching the game's development as closely as they possibly can. Suffice to say that Bethesda are under pressure to appeal both to franchise veterans and create an inclusive experience for everyone.

Well, perhaps not everyone. As you might expect from such a bleak opening, Fallout 3 is definitely not for kids. Subject matter aside, as you explore this post-apocalyptic world, you'll encounter many enemies whose sole objective is to kill you, >



The feral ghouls are even more dangerous when they're glowing, as that means they're still suffering from the effects of radiation - and can use it to power special attacks against you.

>Fallout 3 continued

preferably in as violent a manner as possible. Engaging them in combat, you'll send limbs flying, spraying blood and viscera. Decapitations are not uncommon. Claret splashes on the camera are evidence of the ferocious intensity of the battles. Like we say, it's very much a game for adults only.

Ironically, though, you start the game as a new born baby. Complete with wince-inducingly squelchy sound effects, you exit your mother's womb, with only the ability to cry (press A to emit a gurgly 'wah!') The next few short sections of the game document your growing up - as a one-year-old toddler, you can use a kids' picture book to select your character's stats, while your tenth birthday sees you given your first vault responsibilities -

but as you reach nineteen, your father mysteriously disappears. It turns out that he's left the vault - the first person for two hundred years - and thus starts the main story thread. It's up to you to venture out into the wilderness to find your father, and perhaps more importantly, find out exactly why he went.

The depiction of a world destroyed by nuclear war is wholly convincing - though the game may lack the visual variety of Cyrodiil, it's an undeniably well-realised universe, strangely beautiful at times. Outside, the world is a completely seamless environment, with the various buildings representing the game's 'dungeons' and providing the game's only loads - and they're fairly short ones at that. Ammunition and stimpaks (the game's medical kits) are fairly rare, so it's handy that you get



Though you can patch up Dogmeat if he gets injured, there's no going back should he be killed while scavenging for food or stimpaks - make sure you watch his back if you're sending him out into the wilderness.

a canine companion, Dogmeat, who can forage for you. Be careful, though. An encounters with a host of enemies can see your four-legged friend killed in action - and he won't come back.

Fallout 3's combat is potentially more problematic than Oblivion's - while the first-person shooting seems very solid, it's got a lot of competition from other games in that department. Fortunately, players can take a more strategic approach, with the Vault Assisted Targeting System. This allows you to pause the game and pinpoint individual body parts on your opponent to shoot at. When you've used up your action points you'll be treated to a cinematic cutaway of your attack - often with fairly bloody results.

There's not enough space here to detail all of Fallout 3's many facets - but click through to the next page and you can read more of what's in store in our exclusive interview. For the here and now, all that needs to be said is that it's looking very, very good indeed. ●



If enemies get this close, you're probably best pausing the game and entering VATS mode - you'll almost certainly get effective results from point-blank range.

PREVIEW
FEEDBACK!
Click here to tell us what you think of Fallout 3

360Zine
FALLOUT 3

HOW COMPLETE?

80%

More than just Oblivion with guns

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

90%

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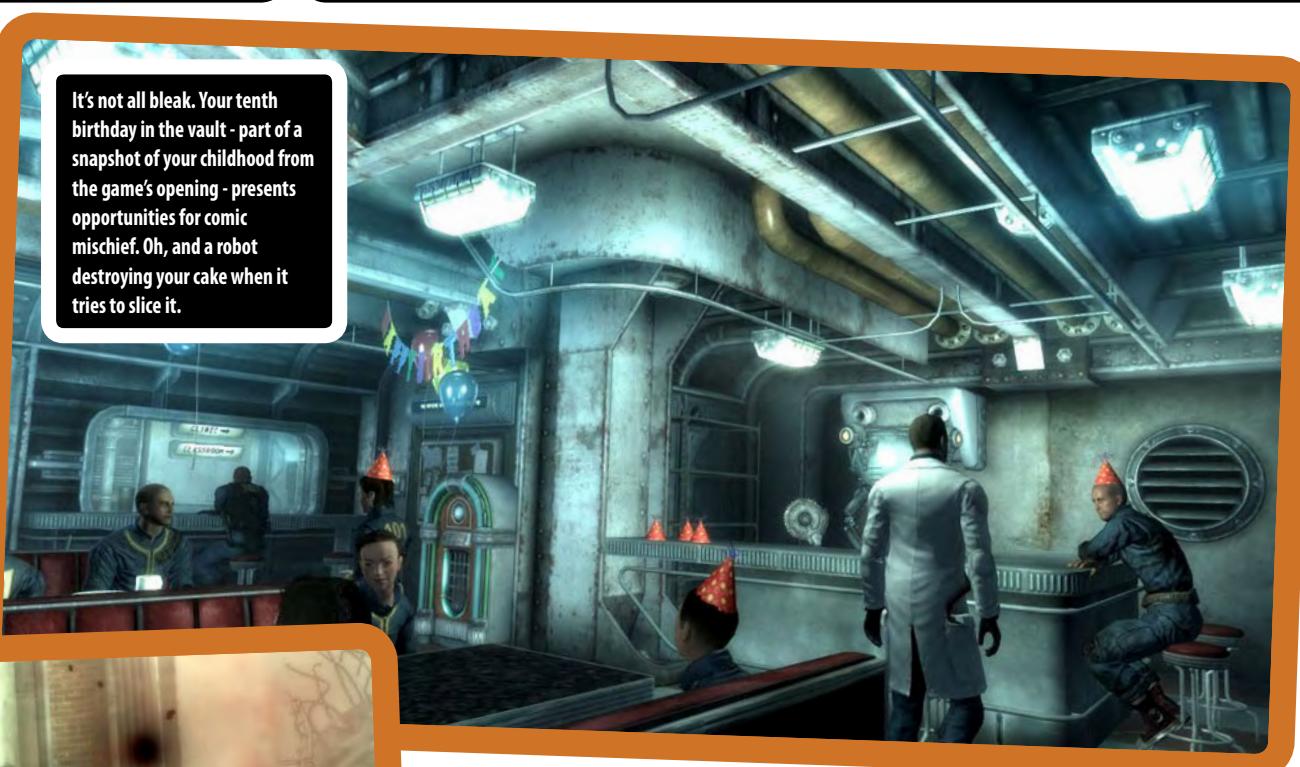


FALLOUT 3

We catch up with Bethesda's **Peter Hines** for a chat about one of the most highly anticipated games of 2008.



It's not all bleak. Your tenth birthday in the vault - part of a snapshot of your childhood from the game's opening - presents opportunities for comic mischief. Oh, and a robot destroying your cake when it tries to slice it.



The entire game can be played in third-person if you prefer - unusually, your character is generally positioned to the left of the screen, particularly when aiming his weapon.

"The ending you get takes into account all the big decisions or key moments in your life"

There have been suggestions that there are literally hundreds of endings to the game...

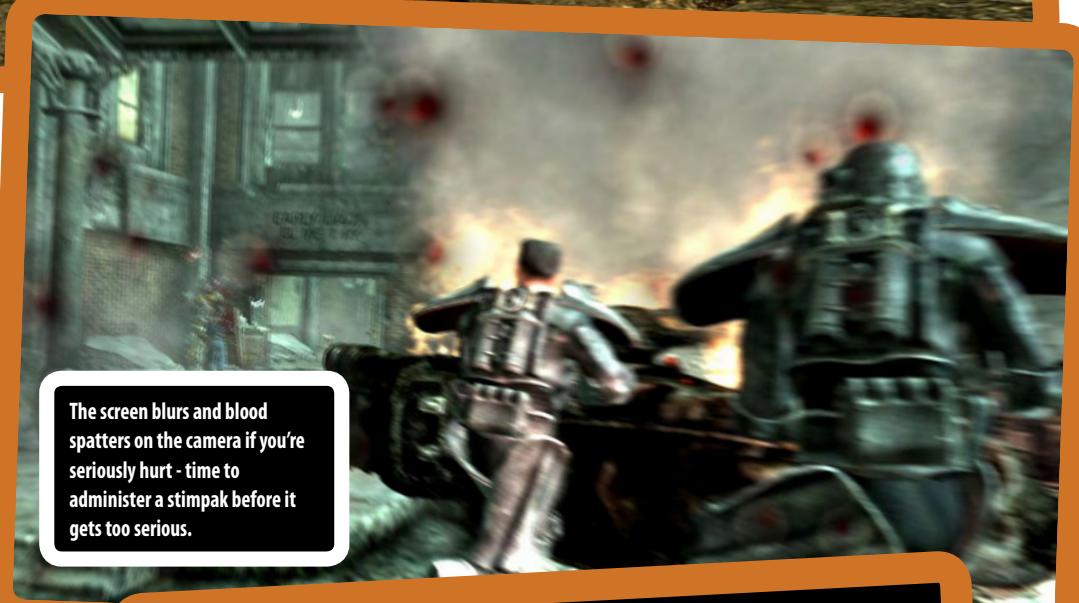
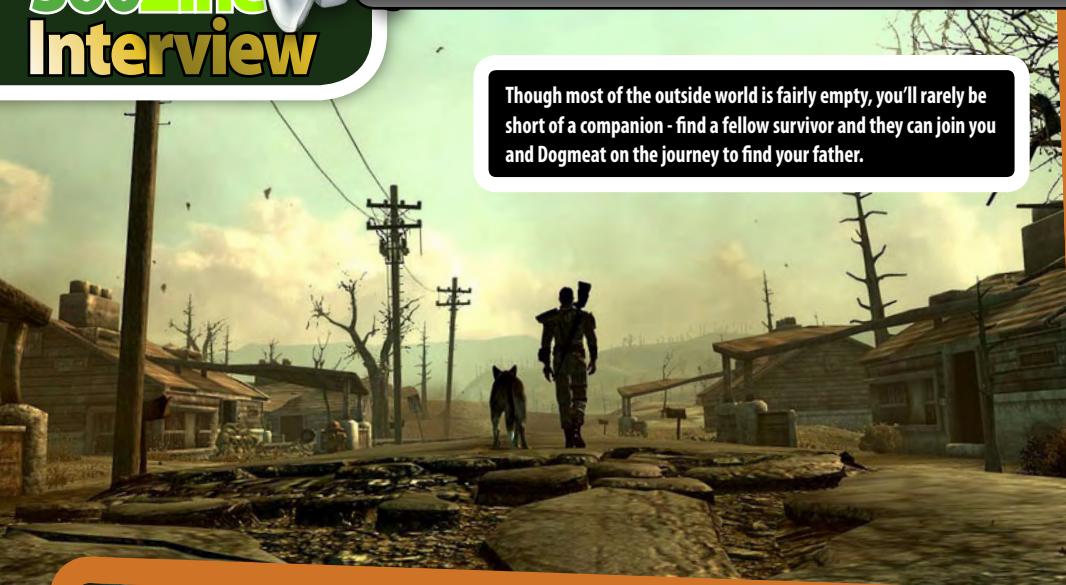
Yeah, we're at over five hundred now.

So are there significant differences between each of those?

No, they're all meant to be flavour, variations. Basically the idea is you have all these key moments within the game

- some of which are main quest related, some of which aren't. It may be just things that you've done along the way. And we want to make sure that the ending you get takes into account all the big decisions or key moments in your life. So once you get to the end point of the game, it's not just "here's a generic ending", or "here's two generic endings". What you may have done may be any number of things in between - we want to come up with an ending that takes into account all you've done. It's actually the way the endings worked in the previous two - they took all the things you did along the way and put them together, and so we're doing a very similar thing.

>



"There are lots of iconic things that we tried to bring back - like the 10mm sub machine gun"

> Interview continued

You mention the earlier games - are there any significant nods to the previous Fallout titles?

Yeah. The character system for example is from the older games. If you've played the original game, then you'll recognise all sorts of stuff - whether it's the Pip-Boy [a device worn on the arm that acts as the game's interface] or even the chairs and the vents in the vault which are nods to similar items in the original game. Lots of the references to the pre-war world and

what things were like beforehand - robots and things like that in the new game that you might have seen in the originals. You could have a dog called Dogmeat in the original ones... basically, there are lots of iconic things that we tried to bring back - like the 10mm sub machine gun that was one of the favourites with folks who played the first game. There are lots of weapons and creatures and all sorts of stuff really, all taken from the original games.

How did the VATS battle system come about?

It was a case of thinking about combat and having something that supplemented the real-time combat that was cinematic and more strategic and used cameras to play it out in a more dramatic style. The big question in the beginning for us was "how are we going to do gun combat, but make it meaningful to stats and skills?" So VATS was our attempt to pay

homage to the original turn-based tactical combat of Fallout, to make it work in the style of game we were making, and present it in a way that was different and unique.

Is Dogmeat your only companion in the game?

He's your only canine companion. You can have a human companion join you along the way - you can recruit people depending on your karma, which is affected by your behaviour in the game. If you have good karma and they have bad, then they won't join you, so you'll need someone with similar karma to you.

Has the fan feedback had any sort of effect on development, or have you blanked that out and said "we're making our own game here"?

You never completely blank it out. I mean, you take all the feedback you get from Oblivion, and you take the feedback you get from [the people who say] "here's what I want in a Fallout game". But what you also find is that there's never total agreement on anything. You'll get people who say "as long as it's got specials, as long as it's got skills and perks then it's Fallout to me, I don't care what perspective it is". And then you get people who say "if it's not isometric and it's not turn-based, then it's not Fallout". So you basically go and you look at what made the game meaningful for them, and try as much as you can to match that with what you're doing, so that you are capturing the important stuff. ●

FALLOUT 3

Publisher: Bethesda

Softworks

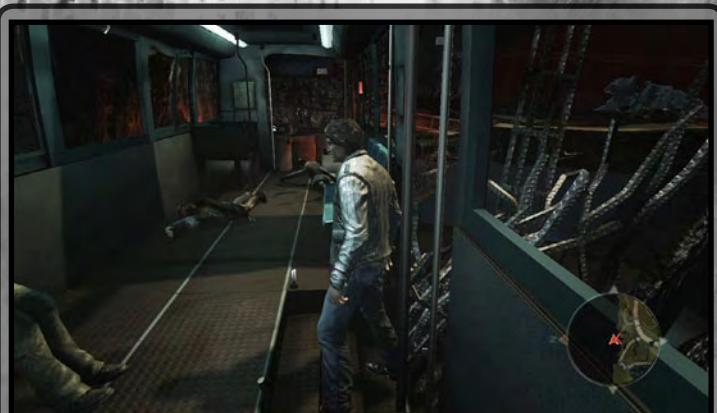
Developer: Bethesda

Softworks

Heritage: The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion, Star Trek Legacy

Link: <http://fallout.bethsoft.com/index.html>

ETA: September



PLAYBACK OPTIONS:

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GAMES



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Eurogamer

ALONE
IN THE DARK

THEY SAID CENTRAL PARK WAS
FOR THE PEOPLE. THEY LIED.



PlayStation.2

Wii

centraldark.com



ATARI

CONTROL ➔





Grand Theft Auto IV



An American dream

Niko Bellic is on the run. Having just knocked off a couple of goons causing trouble for his latest employer, he hotfoots it away from the police, alerted to the scene by loud gunshots and the scream of a witness. Shoving a man from his motorcycle, he clammers aboard and speeds off. He's just about out of sight, when he spins round to check whether his pursuers are still following, failing to see the taxi emerging from a junction.

At full speed, the bike smashes into the front end of the taxi, and Niko is sent spiralling through the air. The screen fades to a sepia tone, and slows down, as Niko smashes against the pavement like a rag doll, his body collapsing into a bloody heap right in front of two onlookers watching from their front porch. One says to the other "now you don't see THAT every day!"

Grand Theft Auto IV is full of moments like this - moments which are

entirely unscripted and unplanned, but which somehow seem to provide some kind of satisfying payoff like this. It creates order from absolute chaos, and vice versa - a standard mission to cap some punks hassling your cousin turns into a full scale police chase, with Niko only escaping by grabbing hold of a passing truck and clinging on for dear life. A seemingly simple set-up is transformed into a set of improvisational leaps by scripted twists and surprise elements - sections where you're freewheeling madly, your brain constantly having to come up with ways to get out of this latest scrape. While past GTAs have always provided personal moments of memorable triumph and just as unforgettable disaster, they've never happened as often as they do here.

Liberty City itself - or its latest incarnation, anyway - is one of the main reasons for this. The attention to

I GET AROUND

How to get from A to B in Liberty City



Grand Theft Auto

Two Wheels Good?

Life on the ocean waves

Grand Theft Auto

Jacking a car is no longer just about getting in. Niko has to smash the window with his elbow before reaching inside and hotwiring the car. You can speed the process up by hitting the trigger buttons, but that extra few seconds mean you need to be more careful.

There's been a lot of thought put into every location. Even seemingly unimportant areas have plenty of background detail, even if it only appears for a fleeting moment in a cutscene.



The game has several multiplayer modes, which are enjoyably chaotic, if not always well-balanced. The team-based modes are most successful, with the self-explanatory Cops 'N' Crooks alongside more traditional deathmatches.

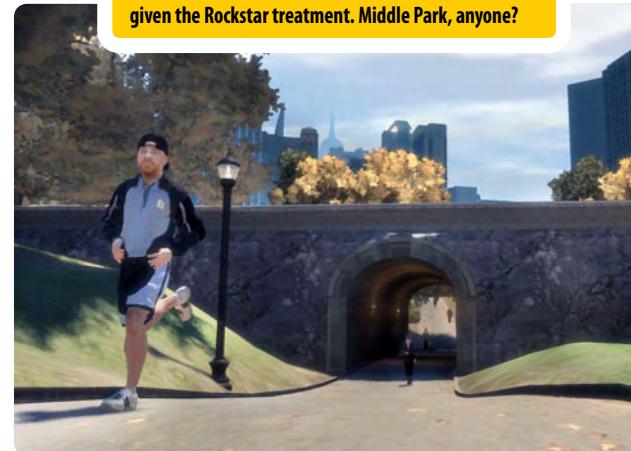
"An indelibly memorable digital universe that you'll want to spend countless hours exploring"



> **GTA IV** continued

detail here is - and we don't use this word lightly - staggering. It feels genuinely, mouth-wideningly, goosebump-inducingly real - when you turn your 360 off, you'll swear the world is carrying on without you. Driving through the streets of Broker (one of the four main districts in the game), you'll witness minutiae like smoke rising from the stands of hot dog vendors, and litter fluttering in the breeze, and more instantly noticeable elements like cops pulling over and arresting criminals, and trains rattling overhead as you drive under bridges. Small gangs will be embroiled in minor gunfights as turf warfare spills onto the streets. Get in a taxi, and your driver will lean his elbow on the seat and look back as he's reversing. Put the bumper-

As Liberty City is based on New York, there are plenty of familiar landmarks and areas which have been given the Rockstar treatment. Middle Park, anyone?



Roll over screen for annotations



cam on when you're behind the wheel and you'll witness stunning sunsets dappling skyscrapers with a hazy orange glow, and rain-lashed streets with flashes of lightning illuminating the gloom of the less salubrious areas

of your new home. You can just spend time cruising through the city like this, taking in all the sights and sounds. Sounds like radios which get louder when car windows are open, or like the 'dit dit dit' of interference with your

signal just before you receive a call on your mobile.

It's your phone that makes this the most streamlined GTA ever, as well as ushering in a more communicative approach. As your cousin Roman

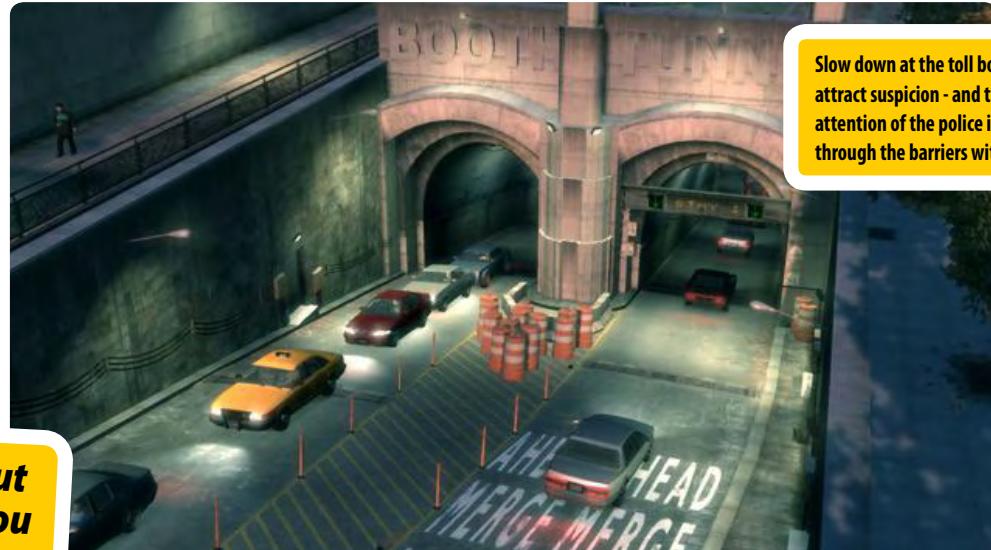


"It feels genuinely, mouth-wideningly, goosebump-inducingly real"



Cutscenes can be fairly lengthy at times, but you'll never want to press the skip button. The earlier characters do seem a little more memorable than those you'll encounter later, though.

"There's a shortcut for everything - you just need to know where it is"



Slow down at the toll booths, or you'll attract suspicion - and the immediate attention of the police if you smash through the barriers without paying!

>GTA IV continued

says, "there's a shortcut for everything - you just need to know where it is" - and he's not just talking about taking those back alleys to throw the police off your trail. Tap up on the d-pad and you'll be able to speed dial any contacts. Initially, this will be Roman alone - the man who brought you to America on the promise of money, flash cars, a fancy apartment and women "with beeg teeties". But gradually, as your profile

increases, Roman's pals, and their acquaintances will want to get in touch with you. After a slow start to the game merely getting to know the local area and performing fairly mundane tasks, the phone won't stop ringing. Various unsavoury characters will ask you to steal vehicles, threaten those late with their protection money payments, and watch over potentially dodgy drug deals from a nearby rooftop with a

sniper rifle in tow. Complete these tasks and you'll form friendships which reap rewards - for starters, Roman will provide a handy cab service for you when you need to get somewhere and don't want to steal a ride. Should you fail a mission, your phone comes in handy again - allowing you to restart at the touch of a button rather than having to return to the starting point.

The missions themselves, while enjoyable enough, are pretty standard

GTA fare. Indeed, those who've played all the home console GTA games may feel a nagging sense of déjà vu during certain sections. But there are several elements which elevate the tasks above those in the previous games. For starters, the simple joy of navigating the city environs is a joy in itself. Secondly, while still not perfect, the controls on foot are much, much better. Though hand-to-hand combat remains pretty poor (and you'll rarely, if ever, need to bother with that after the

>

FREEZE FRAME

Time goes pretty fast... you just need to stop to look around!



10 MINUTES

Stepping off the boat and starting your adventure - though this isn't your average rags-to-riches GTA.



90 MINUTES

Finally getting your first gun. Some won't get on with the slow start, but we like the social elements.



10 HOURS

Chatterbox street warrior Manny Escuela has his own way of cleaning the streets - without getting his own hands dirty.



25 HOURS

If you've ignored everything else, the story will soon be coming to a close - but you're missing out if you rush.



50 HOURS PLUS

Still finding plenty of stuff to laugh at - simply spending twenty minutes watching TV at home is a fun time-killer.



Reviews

Liberteen
EGS TREATER

BANGING TRASH CAN LIDS FOR AN HOUR!



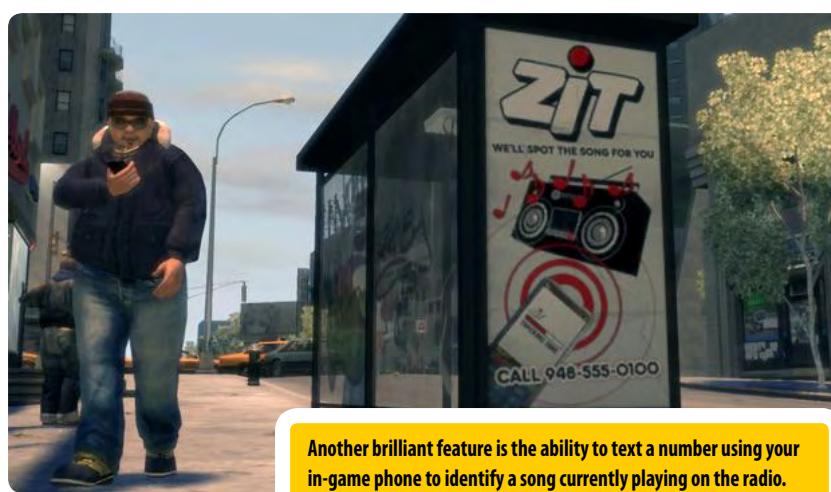
GTA IV takes plenty of swipes at popular culture - its humour can be a little sledgehammer at times, but it's undeniably hilarious in places.

> GTA IV continued

first hour) the gunplay is much more solid. You can stick to cover - and even jump and roll to it when necessary - and squeeze the right trigger to lock onto a target. Nudge the right analogue stick to switch between targets, though you can fine-tune your aim to focus on specific enemy body parts by moving the stick while aiming, too. Though it never feels as solid as a Gears of War, the thrillingly random nature of most encounters - particularly when you hear an approaching siren wail - more than makes up for that.

The game's story helps make the missions more compelling, too. Niko is a realistically flawed, less caricatured protagonist

"Niko is a realistically flawed, less caricatured protagonist"



Another brilliant feature is the ability to text a number using your in-game phone to identify a song currently playing on the radio.



protagonist, and the rest of the cast lend sterling support, too. The script, peppered with hard-boiled dialogue and liberal use of profanity, is impressive, with the radio stations and spoof TV programmes providing several chuckle-worthy moments. There's so much to GTA IV that we could spend five times the amount of

words listing its strengths and still wouldn't come close to describing half the things you'll see and hear during your time in Liberty City. Though it still has several flaws - most notably with its controls and a few uninspired missions - it transcends them through the sheer ambition and bravado shown in its creation. You might curse the game

PULSOMETER Signs of life

Curiously low-key opening

A new start in Bohan

Cops 'N' Crooks online keeps you playing



once or twice, but you'll applaud its brilliance many, many times more. It's an indelibly memorable digital universe - far beyond the capabilities of 99.9% of developers, and one you'll want to spend countless hours exploring. It's a masterpiece. ●

Chris Schilling

360Zine Verdict

Game of the Year? It's over already. An incredible experience.

- ◀ Liberty City is astonishing
- ◀ Jam-packed with distractions
- ◀ More accessible than ever before

97%

E M B R A C E T H E D A R K



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CONTROL ➔





Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Canada
Heritage: EA's Official tournament tie-ins
Link: www.electronicarts.co.uk/uefaeuro2008

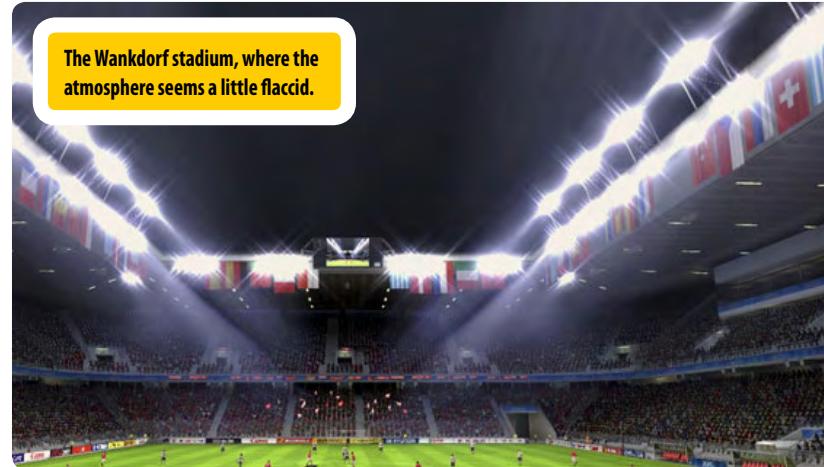
OUT NOW

UEFA Euro 2008

A box of celebrations

The EA bods have got their work cut out convincing us we need a Euro 2008 game in our collection. Let's be honest, it's hardly a best-team-wins scenario when Greece can lift the flippin' trophy, and besides we don't even have any home nation sides to cheer on... But summer tournaments aren't just about partisan allegiances, or Germany winning on penalties like some unstoppable football machine. They're about flair, glamour and great stories of triumph from footballing disaster.

All of the above is present and correct here as EA have delivered an experience worthy of all the pomp and



The Wankdorf stadium, where the atmosphere seems a little flaccid.



Germany win the best-dressed away - "Yay! Let's go wild, girls..."



Yup - Ronaldo is annoyingly good in this game too...

COME ON, LET'S CELEBRATE

Celebrations are crucial in Euro 2008 - here's some of the best we've spotted



The head-pat



The double bass



Siam-easy does it



The head-pat

A classic manoeuvre in which a joyful older player directs the plaudits to his goal-scoring protégée. A great, patronising confirmation of who is, in fact, da man. (Even if the young whipper-snapper notched this time).



A tackle. Savour this moment, you won't see many of these coming in.



FREEZE FRAME

It's a game of two halves y'know...

**4MINS**

Barely five minutes in and we're already drunk on the pomp and ceremony.

**1HR 16MINS**

Our first goal from open play! Yes, it took us that long to score with a proper effort...

**2HRS 12MINS**

A big win counts for the Battle of the Nations, registered points to bring our fair homeland glory!

**7HRS 52MINS**

We've played every mode and finally get focused to win that glittering Euro trophy.

**9HRS 49MINS**

We've perfected our sexy celebration move. But why no Peter Crouch-style robo-dance

> Euro 2008 continued

Where at first matches are fairly dry affairs in which you deploy the basics of shooting, passing and dribbling, eventually you'll open up your

playbook and begin to dazzle.

Feints and tricks are just the glimmering tip of an iceberg that also features more mundane, but still deliciously authentic manoeuvres such as trapping the ball and making a run.

In fact, once you get going, juggling the ball and bringing your team mates into play, there's barely any stopping you. And therein lies a double-edged sword - opponents are sickeningly well-behaved, failing to put the boot in no matter how much you try to draw a foul, and defensive play is of far less importance than attacking moves.

Both are blows to realism, though together - and combined with admirably lenient refereeing - make for flowing play that is rarely interrupted by a menu screen.

Off the pitch you've got everything you need for a Euro party minus the beer stains and triangular flag bunting.

Special attention has been paid to the joy of scoring a goal. Twitch your gleeful fingers around a few button combos and you'll have your players dancing like Ronaldo on Christmas bonus night.

Managers too have been well observed, with uncanny likenesses punctuated by ultra-realistic managerial points and suitably cheesed off arm folding. When you get sick of reality, you can turn to the scenario mode, taking control at key moments in matches to put right what once went hideously wrong in qualification, putting your failing nation back on the map. In fact, woven into the Euro 2008 experience is the notion of representing your country. The Captain Your Country mode gives you the chance to vie for the armband of your chosen nation, competing in several clashes as a single player. It's a neat twist on the Be A Pro mode from FIFA, even if passing to a dumbass midfield team-mate as a wannabe Scotland captain can prove cheek-bitingly frustrating.

If you really want to play for England, there's no finer way to do so without pulling on your boots and begging Fabio for a game than the Represent Your Country mode.

Here your performances in competitive matches will be rated and

added to a European-wide league table of registered players. Do well and personal, as well as national, glory is yours. Turns out England could prove to be the best footballing country on the continent after all... ●



Close control is vital.
Master it and you'll
humble many a foe.



Relive England's qualification
agony. Or better still, reverse it.



Yellow cards are
rare in a supremely
free-flowing game.

360Zine Verdict

Yet another footy game?
Yes, please.

- Classy presentation
- Mountain of options
- Not instantly accessible

77%
%

WSC real 08

world snooker championship

The official game of snooker produced with Infinite Worlds™ & new Real mode.

"Now that's interesting!"

PLAY FOR
real



"It goes like a rocket!"



PC

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'It's a tour de force of how sports games should look.'

X360 Gamer

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CONTROL ➔



Xbox Live Arcade Round-Up...

Another fantastic four available for download today...



Tiqual

Developer: Slapdash Games
Publisher: Slapdash Games Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

Tiqual is an addictive mix of Lumines and Tetris, with more than a hint of Zuma in its design. Presenting you with a row of coloured blocks (and a Mayan influenced background), it's up to you to drop a variety of different shaped blocks (which bear a striking resemblance to certain Tetris pieces) onto the board, to form a 2x2 square of a solid colour. As the pieces take a

"An addictive mix of Lumines and Tetris"

while to explode, there's a huge potential for screen clearing combos, and with a co-op mode also present and correct, Tiqual is well worth a look.

- ↳ Life swallowing
- ↳ Co-op
- ↳ Great gameplay

Stuff of Gods

88%

Mr. Driller Online

Developer: NAMCO BANDAI Games
Publisher: NAMCO BANDAI Games
Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

The first Dreamcast port of the month, Mr. Driller is something of a gaming icon. Playing as the little guy in the pink jumpsuit, it's your sole purpose in life to drill as much as you possibly can, until you eventually reach the bottom, or more likely get squished by a block. While it's called Mr. Driller Online, the online play is laggy than a sloth with arthritis. To make things worse, there's no offline multiplayer which makes this one hard to recommend.



- ↳ Great Mr. Driller action
- ↳ Brilliant offline
- ↳ Awful online

Good, if you have no friends 70%



Ikaruga

Developer: Treasure Publisher: Treasure Studios
Price: 800 MP (~£6.80)

The second Dreamcast port of the month, Ikaruga has been given a second lease of life on the XBLA, after becoming something of a forgotten classic, some six years ago. Ikaruga is a Japanese vertical-scrolling shooter, with a difficulty level that's been tweaked almost to perfection. During play, you'll be attacked by two colours of enemies, white and black. Depending on your polarity, you can then absorb bullets of the same colour, deal extra damage to ships of the opposite colour, and chain together kills of same-colour enemies for huge bonuses. Well worth a buy.

- ↳ Innovative gameplay
- ↳ Great dual-colour system
- ↳ Polished

Forgotten classic rises again 90%



Battlezone

Developer: Stainless Games Publisher: Atari
Price: 400 MP (~£3.40)

We know we've been damning of these "updates" in the past, but we have to admit, this time, Stainless have got it bang on! Offering two versions of the game in one neat package (both retro, and "evolved") this time, the evolved version is head and shoulders above the original, and the graphical overhaul is gorgeous. Sticking perfectly to the feel of the original, whilst maintaining the same addictive gameplay, Battlezone is a real steal for £3.40, and well worth the asking price. Hey, it even uses the Xbox Vision Cam!



- ↳ Great Retro burst
- ↳ Beautiful updated graphics
- ↳ Right Price

Mmm. Vector-y.

85%



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Next Month

In 360Zine Issue 18



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LEGO INDIANA JONES: THE ORIGINAL ADVENTURES
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ALONE IN THE DARK

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ROBERT LUDLUM'S

THE **BOURNE** CONSPIRACY™

EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW

THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY

PLUS

EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW

We talk to Lead
Designer **Rory**
McGuire inside...





Welcome

While the explosive film trilogy looks to have run its course (internet rumours notwithstanding), Jason Bourne is set to continue his search for the truth on the small screen. Hot on the heels of Identity, Supremacy and Ultimatum, this summer will see the release of Robert Ludlum's Bourne Conspiracy on next-gen consoles. By dipping in and out of the films, and the late Ludlum's novels on which they were based, Conspiracy is set to fill in the gaps for Bourne-philes everywhere. Taking over where Matt Damon left off, you get under Bourne's skin as you punch, kick and shoot your way through a swathe of enemies across a series of bleak global destinations. We were privy to an exclusive preview version, and played it until our thumbs ceased and we became hyper sensitive to light. Read all about our flashback and what you can expect from the full version...

INTERVIEW



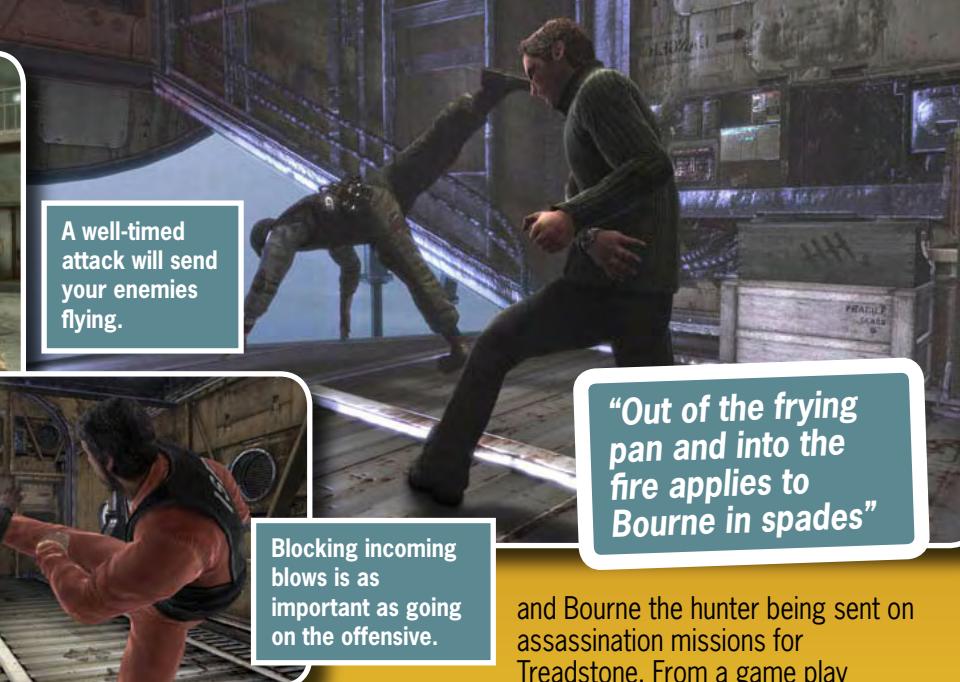
PROFILE

Rory McGuire is Lead Designer at High Moon Studios and the man behind Robert Ludlum's Bourne Conspiracy.

Bourne has plenty of melee moves to take the enemy down.



A well-timed attack will send your enemies flying.



"Out of the frying pan and into the fire applies to Bourne in spades"

ROLL OVER
THE BIG PICTURE

Blocking incoming blows is as important as going on the offensive.

Bourne to win

Lead Designer Rory McGuire waxes lyrical about Jason Bourne's first videogame adventure

Are the events of the game more closely inspired by Robert Ludlum's original novel, or the Bourne Identity film?

The video game is a companion to both the films and the books. It's essentially a third shelf, adding a video game based on Jason Bourne's mythology to the existing Bourne entertainment library. We've taken inspiration from both the films and books, redefining Bourne from a film and book action hero into a game character that players can become. In the game the notion of 'being'

Bourne is conveyed through the action, the experiences and sense of control players will feel in settings that are both recognisable and fresh.

From the screenshots and footage shown so far, it looks like there's more gunplay in the game in comparison to the Bourne films - why is that?

All the action in the game is defined around Bourne's signature abilities that make him the perfect human weapon. This is represented in the films through Bourne's hand-to-hand

combat skills, his ability to escape deadly situations and even his skill behind the wheel of a car. Bourne finds himself in these situations because in the films, he's a malfunctioning government agent on the run. He's also developed a conscience - a traumatic side effect of his past as an assassin and, at times, an indiscriminate killer. This is why firefight scenes are brief in the movies; he's not going to run around gunning down those hunting for him, especially considering that, for the most part, these are civil personnel like he used to be. Yet to us, even in those brief moments with a gun, Bourne still displays that same combat expertise. For the game, we created a framework for both fighting and shooting by letting players become both Bourne the hunted (i.e. the Bourne you know from the films)

and Bourne the hunter being sent on assassination missions for Treadstone. From a game play standpoint, this allowed us to create an action game that gives players the option of moving seamlessly between fighting and shooting. Ultimately, the design of the combat in the game and the arsenal and abilities given to players are well within the parameters of the character of Jason Bourne.

The game spends some time exploring Bourne's past prior to events in Identity - will certain scenes have more resonance to those who are more familiar with the series?

Working with the Ludlum estate and Tony Gilroy - the screenwriter on all three films - we expanded on the storyline of the books and films to uncover the events that led to Bourne's breakdown. In the game, players relive missions from Bourne's past as a fully functioning government weapon. Each mission, while fun to the player, is



**→ INTERVIEW CONTINUED**

in a sense a complete disaster. Bourne is given bad intel by his Treadstone handler Conklin, he's put in bad situations and he's always left fighting for himself without any plan to exfiltrate him. These situations force him to fight his way out, indiscriminately killing those in his way. For Bourne fans, it's a new chapter and experience in the history of the character they've come to know. For any action game fan, they're exciting missions where the objectives and situations are always changing, and the action is running at a constant high pace.

How important was it to have the support of Robert Ludlum's estate holders? Did that allow you more freedom for what you could include in the game?

It was critical to have not just involvement, but a good working relationship with folks at Ludlum



"The goal was to consistently make the player feel like the star of the action"

Entertainment. With Robert Ludlum's passing, they are the guardians of his creative vision for Jason Bourne. They gave us the right boundaries for the mythology Mr. Ludlum has created for this character and his compelling story. That enabled us to explore and become creative with what we could do within that space.

After Matt Damon ended his involvement with the series, obviously it was impossible to have Bourne look like the actor. When he reconsidered his

position and signed up for a fourth film, did you consider approaching him again, or was the game too far forward at that stage?

We wanted Matt Damon to portray the game character when

we first began development, but that was during the time when he was publicly questioning if he would even continue with the film franchise. We want to establish a game franchise for Jason Bourne. While naturally any future games are going to be dependant on the success of this first title, there still has to be a solid, consistent foundation for that. For us, first and foremost, that reality came through creating compelling gameplay defined around the most meaningful elements that typify Bourne. Ultimately, our goal is to immerse players in the character and his universe, to let them 'become Bourne'. Celebrity involvement very quickly took a back seat for us.

The game has several brutal fight sequences, which were choreographed by the fight co-ordinator on the film series. Given that the interactivity required means it's impossible to

recreate the shaky-cam rapid-cut action of the movies themselves, how difficult was it to get the desired effect?

Indeed, we spent time directly with Mr. Jeff Imada, the fight choreographer on the movies. He not only helped motion capture all our animations, but he also assisted in designing the fight system that we have today. Beyond just the movements that the characters execute, fight choreography is also central in the movies and they way they are framed. The handheld camera style of Paul Greengrass is really one of the essences of the Bourne franchise as a whole; and it's influenced moviemaking substantially in the years that have followed since Supremacy and recently Ultimatum. The goal was to consistently make the player feel like they were the star of the action when they were controlling the character; we wanted to make sure that the player didn't

The game moves from one-on-one fights to larger scale gun battles with amazing smoothness.

**WATCH THE TRAILER!**

Click Play to see the game trailer now...



**→ INTERVIEW CONTINUED**

feel like the only time the game was cinematic was during a cutscene. To capture that feel of the movies, the approach that we took was a philosophy of "The player always has a camera man following him" this philosophy guided all the time we spent working on cameras. As a result, we were able to get a very cinematic feel when the player was in-game and in control of Bourne.

Tell us more about the Quick-Action Events - what sets them apart from the QTEs featured in other games?

The approach that we took with Quick-Actions was that it was moments of action that normally most games would show in a cinematic we wanted to deliver in-game and with the player

participating in. When the player gets a quick action sequence, it's usually something incredibly over the top that is going to leave their jaw on the floor when they actually get to participate in it.

The game is split between hand-to-hand combat and gunfights, with Escape and Evade sections too - does the game lean more heavily towards one single aspect, or have you tried to mix it up as much as possible?

One of the true strengths of the game is the seamlessness of the hand-to-hand and shooting. Not only the seamless transitions but the control that the player has when choosing who he engages. If an

Bourne can use the environment to his advantage in the hand-to-hand scraps.



It wouldn't be Bourne without a blistering car chase – and thankfully the game delivers on that front in spades.

The gunfights will be more frequent and intense than in the films...



...while certain sections require a more stealthy approach.

enemy presents himself, it's ultimately up to the player how he solves a situation, he makes the choice whether it's going to be through hand-to-hand or weapon use. The player can choose to hang back or rush forward and engage them. We mix things up on the player for setups and the situations he runs into, but the player himself is also able to alter his strategy, depending on how he feels at any given moment.

The pacing of the films is arguably what makes them so compelling - is that something you were particularly keen to get across in the game?

Absolutely. The pacing of the films is what makes them what they are. Bourne always has a threat behind him pushing him along (such as police or military). Additionally, he's always being presented with problems in front of him. The old cliché of "out of

the frying pan and into the fire" applies to Bourne in spades. The essence of the Bourne character in the books and movies, but what we captured in the game as well, isn't just that he's put into these situations, it's his ability to react to them. Playing as Bourne, the player will be put into these cinematic and tense situations, at times without a weapon and just their wits to get them past an embassy full of marines or half of the Parisian police force.

Finally, do you think Conspiracy might be the first step on the road to a whole new Bourne franchise?

We have yet to announce anything for further titles, but both the books and the movies are a large franchise with multiple stories in their series. We hope that Conspiracy is as well received as the books and movies have been. ■





Publisher: Vivendi
Developer: High Moon Studios
Heritage: Darkwatch
Link: www.bournethegame.com
ETA: June 27th 2008

HANDS ON

ROBERT LUDLUM'S THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY

He's Bourne again...

In the space of five short years, the Bourne trilogy has seared itself indelibly into 21st century cinema, with Jason Bourne proving a prescient hero for an increasingly paranoid world. If for some reason you've never seen any of the Matt Damon films, imagine a harder-edged James Bond, with the raised

eyebrow replaced by a furrowed brow, the holiday brochure locales supplanted by bleak European cities, and the gimmicky gadgetry giving way to the techno stylings of 24. With more than a nod to the brutal thrillers of the 70s, such was the effect of Bourne's arrival that the other JB was forced to re-evaluate his act, →



GAMEPLAY
VIDEO!

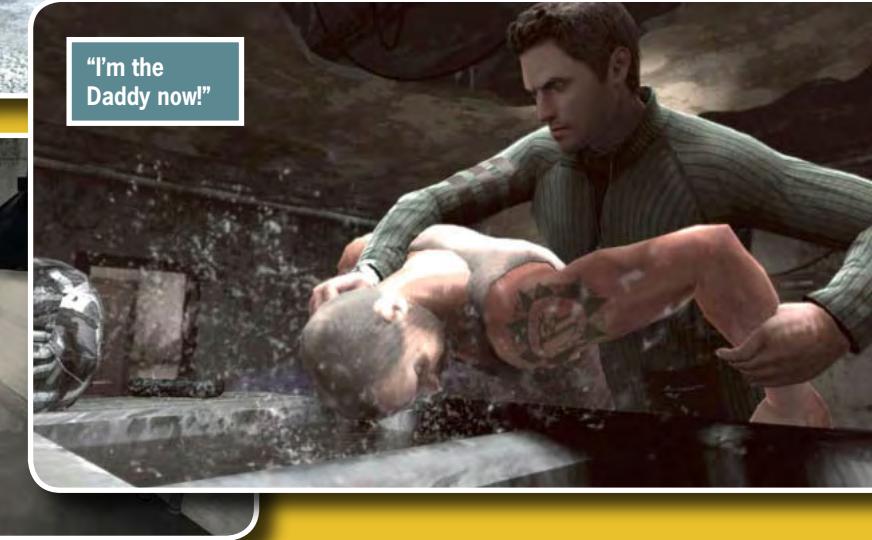
Click Play to
see Bourne
in action...



Should have
taken the lift.



"I'm the
Daddy now!"





→ THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY CONTINUED

culminating in Daniel Craig being repeatedly whacked in the bollocks in a pivotal scene in Casino Royale. The Bond films have of course spawned many a game, and the same fate was inevitable for Bourne. In fact you'd be hard pushed to think of a series that was better suited to a film adaptation. The amnesia-ridden lead character is a perfect blank canvas for the player, and he

BOURNE TO WIN

He's the man who can...



Fighting

Shooting

Driving

FIGHTING

The kind of bloke who can start an argument in an empty room, Jason Bourne spends a large part of the game in hand-to-hand combat. Top grappling.



ROLL OVER
THE BIG



Not the best
person to
subject to a bit
of road rage.

With enough
adrenaline,
multiple
takedowns are
possible.

spends much of his screen time slapping enemies upside the head, shooting them, or using parts of the scenery in an inventive fashion. So it's no surprise, then, that Conspiracy is every bit the DVD bonus content, with the key difference being that you **are** Jason Bourne.

Incidentally, you're not Matt Damon, who had no part in the project. In fact, it's largely a clean slate in terms of film talent, although fight choreographer Jeff Imada is

involved, as is screenplay writer Tony Gilroy. While for the music, it's out with Moby, and in with superstar DJ Paul Oakenfold, who has recorded an entirely new score.

As for the story, it weaves around the fiction, with a few scenes lifted directly from The Bourne Identity, including the Mini Cooper car chase, and the attempted assassination of Wombosi. In fact, the opening levels build up to that key event, with the game kicking off two days before the beginning of the first film. And

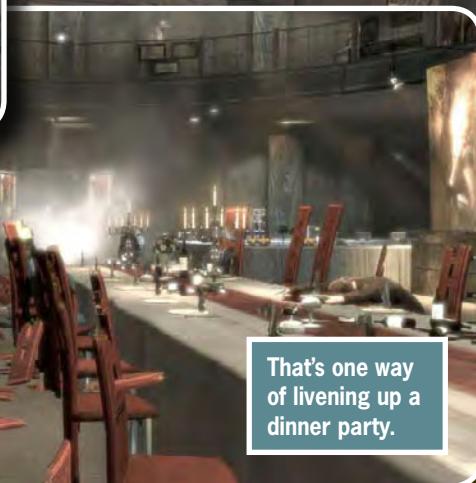
pretty soon it does properly kick off. Initially, you get a chance to use your CIA-honed skills in a bar fight in Marseilles, batting away assailants with a flick of the wrist and a pummelling of the pad. With a light attack or heavy attack, various combos produce different responses, and each can be charged up to give your foe either a quick kick or full-on roundhouse. As you fight, your adrenaline bar fills up until you are able to carry out a takedown. It's here that Bourne gets really creative, with Jason using any part of the scenery to disable his enemy.

Fans of the film will recognise the





ROLL OVER THE LEFT OR RIGHT
OF THE IMAGE TO SPIN IT!



→ THE BOURNE CONSPIRACY CONTINUED

biro in the hand trick, along with the book in the face, but with over 250 animations included there are such delights as smacking enemies faces into a photocopier, drowning them in sinks or introducing them to the blunt end of vending machines. It really is some of the most brutal combat we've seen outside of a

traditional beat-em-up.

No shirker when it comes to armoury, Bourne also progresses from pistol to shotgun to machine gun, taking on multiple enemies from the fleeting safety of anything he can find to take cover behind - there's a lovely touch where pretty much all cover in the game is fully perishable. Utilising the so-called Bourne instinct, by pressing the

relevant button, nearby enemies are highlighted and targeted, enabling you to rapidly pick them off without exposing yourself for too long. The gunfights are on the frantic side of mental, with an entire army of terrorists taking over an airport as you attempt to board a cargo plane, for instance.

Unsurprisingly, everything is presented in an extremely cinematic fashion, to the extent of Tomb Raider style interactive cut scenes. At a key moment, such as leaping out of the way of certain death, a button flashes up on screen, and you have the ungenerous part of a second to press it correctly in order to seal your fate. Thankfully, these are

easily surmountable and not frequent enough to erode the general sense of turbo charged progress.

With a healthy spread of levels promised, covering both new ground and old, Robert Ludlum's The Bourne Conspiracy is set to feature considerably more action than sitting in and watching the trilogy in its entirety. Although it has to be said, the latter option is much easier on the thumbs and heart rate. ■

ROBERT LUDLUM'S
THE BOURNE
CONSPIRACY
OUT
JUNE 27TH



CONTROL →

